



Tobacco Tid-bits

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Southwest Washington Health District

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Anti-tobacco Program Launched

The state launched its 15 million dollar anti-tobacco campaign this month. The goal is to help Washington residents kick the tobacco habit and prevent young people from starting. Clark County will receive \$118,422 and Skamania County will receive \$20,000. The contracts will begin this September, and provide a full 12 months of funding. The money is part of a 206 billion dollar settlement in 1998 between the tobacco industry and 46 states. AP

Settlement Dollar Proposal

The Southwest Washington Health District will submit a proposal for those settlement dollars. Director, Community Health and Wellness Division, Janet Charles says, "the proposal will include a process for involving citizens and groups in developing appropriate local solutions." Implementing the grant will depend heavily on establishing a broad local tobacco prevention coalition in both counties. This will entail bringing together advocates, organizers and volunteers to identify, plan and support tobacco prevention efforts and partnerships. Watch for information on how you can be involved.

Citations Issued in Tobacco Sting

Seven stores in Central Vancouver were cited and fined after a police tobacco sting operation there. On July 7th the Vancouver Police Department sent a 17 year old into 19 convenience stores to try to buy cigarettes. According to the VPD— 7 stores sold cigarettes to the juvenile and 5 of the 7 checked his identification. The teen was instructed not to conceal his ID— and to give his correct age if asked. This high sell rate is a huge concern for James Lanz, Health Nurse with Southwest Washington Health District. Lanz says, "it's clearly not enough for store owners to only train their employees to ask for ID; owners need to make sure they understand how to calculate whether the customer is 18." The 7 clerks who sold tobacco to the minor were issued citations for a gross misdemeanor— and fines ranging from \$161 to \$211.

Treating Tobacco Use

Tobacco dependence is a chronic condition that needs repeated treatment until the smoker permanently quits. This is one of the recommendations of a recent US Public Health Report, *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: A Clinical Practice Guideline*. The report also finds that effective tobacco treatments exist and all clinical and health care systems should be offering them to tobacco users at every visit. The report concludes tobacco treatments are more cost-effective than disease interventions— and health insurance plans should cover recommended treatments. Dr. Karen Steingart, Health Officer for Clark and Skamania Counties, feels this report is important because it puts to rest, once and for all, the belief that if you cannot quit on your own, there is nothing more to do. "There is a range of effective treatments and strategies, including brief and intensive counseling and medications, for patients willing and unwilling to quit tobacco. The bottom line is that treatment of tobacco use and dependence is successful."

Washington Youth Awarded Grants

Washington received a 2.25 million dollar grant this month to help fight tobacco use among young people. According to Attorney General Christine Gregoire, the grant— from the American Legacy Foundation— will be distributed over three years. Washington is one of 18 states to receive grants— and Gregoire says, "this speaks very loudly about the potential Washington has to be one of the leaders in the fight against youth tobacco use." The grants will be used to expand the organization known as SOUL (Saving Ourselves from Unfiltered Lies), a statewide youth movement against Tobacco use.

Cigar Warning Labels

Soon you will see warning labels on cigars. Surgeon General David Satcher says, "the absence of the warning gave the impression that cigars were a harmless alternative to cigarettes." The new warning will be bigger and bolder than cigarette warnings— and it will appear on the front of the package. *Washington Post*.

Big Blow for Big Tobacco

The Tobacco Industry was ordered to pay 145 billion dollars in punitive damages to sick Florida smokers. The two year trial ended on July 14; with the largest jury award ever. In Washington 8,000 people are killed every year by tobacco. The state spends 1.3 billion dollars annually for tobacco related illnesses. If Washington were to submit a bill to the tobacco industry for the last 10 years— it would amount to 13 billion dollars.

Smoking Worse for Twins

It's a proven fact that smoking is a serious health concern during pregnancy - but a new study shows that the risks are even greater for twin births. According to a study reported in the March *American Journal of Public Health*, twin pregnancies already carry the risk of low birth weight and premature births - but smoking increases those risks.

SWMC Receives Summit Award

The Southwest Washington Medical Center was presented the Summit award by Community Choices 2010 and Safety Work Group. The Summit award is given to a local business that makes an outstanding contribution to the reduction of tobacco use in Clark County. There is no smoking permitted anywhere on their campus. For more information on how you can provide a smoke-free environment where you are - contact Gail Helland at the SWMC - (360) 696-5153.

Note From the Editor

This newsletter is distributed by The Southwest Washington Health District as a communication and information mechanism for those people and organizations that have an active interest in tobacco prevention and cessation in our community. We encourage your story ideas and feedback. Please let us know if *Tobacco Tid-Bits* is useful in helping to bring you current information about local, state, regional and national tobacco prevention efforts and news, in a short, easy-to-read format. Just call or e-mail any of the numbers above with your ideas and comments. We look forward to hearing from you. Kimberly Nelson, Tobacco Tid-bits